

MSHDA/DTE Energy Assistance Meeting Frequently Asked Questions

August 18, 2021

Phrases to Note and Helpful Links

CERA – [Covid Emergency Rental Assistance](#)

SER – [State Emergency Relief](#)

LSP – [Low Income Self-Sufficiency Plan](#)

MDHHS – [Michigan Department of Health and Human Services](#)

DTE FAQs

Q: So, will CERA help with my DTE Energy bill?

A: Yes, the CERA program can help if you are a renter and behind on your DTE bill. Go to www.michigan.gov/cera to get more information and apply.

Q: How do you apply for the LSP program?

A: You must have approved State Emergency Relief (SER) from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Your consumption must not exceed 1600 kWh electrical use and 2750 CCF for gas (total 3750 units of energy) and your past due balance cannot exceed \$3,000. If you believe you qualify, you must apply with partnering agencies to validate your LSP application. You can find a list of partner agencies to work with at dteenergy.com/lsp under "how to apply".

Q: How do I get help for just behind on my DTE Energy bill?

A: All customers should apply for an SER through the MDHHS. After applying for an SER, you can go to our partnering agencies which can be found at dteenergy.com/lsp or contact 211 for LSP or further assistance if needed.

Q: I just tried to apply for energy assistance, but the CERA website keeps sending me to apply for rental assistance. Do I have to fill all this out?

A: Yes, the CERA application must be filled out completely.

Q: On the CERA website, I only see help for the rent application, where do I go for utility?

A: Part of the application asks about your energy bills. If you apply online, the application will ask you to upload a copy of your energy bills. You can use a phone or tablet to take a picture of your bills to upload them.

Q: Would utility or energy assistance be considered if SER/MEAP funding has already been issued?

A: If you have already received an approved SER, you can still apply for one-time assistance with an agency. However, you can only receive one approved SER per fiscal year. The fiscal year runs between Oct. 1 and Sept. 30.

Q: My energy service has been disconnected. I have applied for CERA. What do I do now?

A: If you have applied for an SER or CERA after your services were turned off, please call DTE's Customer Service line at 1-800-477-4747 for further assistance.

Q: Can we apply for an LSP program if we were already denied an SER from the Department of Health and Human Services?

A: If you were denied an SER application, you are not eligible for LSP.

Q9: If my husband is no longer in the home and the DTE Energy bill is in his name, can I still receive help on my DTE bill since me and my kids are in the home?

A: Yes, you can still apply for a SER through DHHS. However, our partnering agencies will require the bill to be in your name. Please call DTE at 1-800-477-4747 to switch the account into your name.

Q: What if you lost your house as the pandemic happened and couldn't get help nor get the utilities taken care of because they weren't answering? We will be getting housing assistance, but we need the bill paid to get services restored at a different location.

A: If you are an income-qualified customer, you can start new services with DTE Energy by paying 10% of your balance. Once services are active, the DTE team will file an SER on your behalf and refer you to agency assistance.

Q: I have the receipt for my payments made, plus emails I sent to validate the birth certificates of those in my household. Do I need to do anything else to validate my income?

A: If you are in the process of validating your income with DTE, you will need a copy of social security cards and most recent paystubs. Once documentation is received you will receive a case number as confirmation. The process can take between 24 and 48 hours.

Q: Why did the assistance rollover stop? Without the rollover it makes it terribly uneasy to pay your bills.

A: All customers should apply for a SER through DHHS. After applying for an SER, you can go to our partnering agencies which can be found at dteenergy.com/lsp or contact 211 for LSP or further assistance if needed. We can also provide energy efficiency tips to help control your energy use.

Q: If you have a past due DTE balance but you want to enroll in LSP, am I still responsible for past balance even though SER suggested the agencies to request assistance for the customer portion?

A: Late fees and Heating Protection Program (HPP) fees are the customer's responsibility. However, if the past due balance was validated by LSP agency, you can enroll into LSP.

Q: I'm on a payment plan with DTE and my bill is high. I had an SER in January. What can I do to get my bill down?

A: If you have an approved SER and are within LSP consumption guidelines, you can apply for LSP with our partnering agencies.

Q15: Can you get rebate for freezer and fridge?

A: Yes, we offer a \$50 rebate through our energy waste reduction program, Appliance Recycling. Learn more, [here](#).

Q: IS there any way I can be put back in a low-income program to start service at a property I brought from the Detroit Land Bank?

A: If you qualify as a low-income customer, you can start new services with DTE by paying 10% of your balance. Once services are active, we will file an SER and refer to other agency assistance.

Q: I have a disconnect notice from DTE Energy. I was in the LSP program and was kicked out in June, I had to apply for SER so now I'm waiting. My question is will I be able to get help?

A: Yes. As long your income and consumption has not changed, you should be able to get an approved SER for this fiscal year and can then re-apply for LSP.

Q: Is it true if you get an SER for your DTE bill that you have to pay half of whatever you owe?

A: If your service is off and you have not been able to meet the payments of the Shutoff Protection Plan twice, we will require you to pay 50% of your current balance to rejoin the program. If you cannot pay 50% of your current balance, please work with local agencies to receive assistance.

Q: I qualified for low-income assistance with DTE but my bill is through the roof. I cannot keep up and the minimum is beyond my ability, what program would you recommend?

A: Please reach out to us at 1-800-477-4747 so we can assist by reviewing your account, usage and personal situation to better advise you with energy assistance or efficiency tips.

Q: Is appliance recycling available for air conditioners?

A: Room air conditioners are included in our appliance recycling program. Each visit is limited to two large appliances (refrigerator and/or freezer) and two small appliances (small fridge or freezer, room air conditioner and/or dehumidifier). Please check out our website to learn more.

MSHDA FAQs

Q: Is this only for Wayne County residents or can Oakland County residents receive help as well?

A: The CERA program is statewide. Go to <https://www.michigan.gov/CERA> to get more information and apply.

Q: What does it mean if a CERA case worker is processing your case? How long will it take to get the money to my landlord management? The CERA program put a hold on my DTE energy shut off. I do need help with my internet bill which is \$137.00 dollars. I submitted my application for CERA in March 30, 2021.

A: If your case is in Processing status, it is generally approved in 1-2 weeks. When it is approved, you'll receive an email that will have the specifics on how much rental and utility assistance you'll be receiving.

Q: Before an application can be considered, do the tenant and the landlord applications have to be submitted at the same time?

A: The tenant and landlord will each get their own email with a link to complete their portion of the application. They do not have to apply at the same time.

Q: I submitted an application on June 7th for back rent. Just two weeks ago, I was contacted for more info. Now it's been saying processing. How long will I have to continue to wait? By the processing time, I've been waiting longer than eight weeks. What can I do?

A: When a case is in Processing status it is generally approved within 1-2 weeks. When it is approved, you will get an email with the specific funding amounts for rent and utilities.

Q: Children and I lost their father due to COVID so my household income lowered. Does this count?

A: We are sorry for your loss. Yes, this would count as an income reduction. Please go to <https://www.michigan.gov/CERA> for more information and to apply.

Q: Are any of these programs/funds available to Upper Peninsula?

A: The CERA program is available statewide. Go to <https://www.michigan.gov/CERA> to get more information and to apply.

Q: What if you don't get approved for SER? What happen next?

A: You can still apply for CERA energy assistance funds at [michigan.gov/CERA](https://www.michigan.gov/CERA). You can also call DTE Energy at 800-477-4747 to discuss your options and energy needs.

Q: I live in a co-op. Is there any assistance for co-op owners?

A: Depending on your specific co-op situation you might be eligible for CERA. Please apply if you are behind on your rent or utilities, please go to <https://www.michigan.gov/CERA> to get more information and apply.

Q: Can homeowners apply?

A: There will be a separate program starting in a couple months to help homeowners.

Q: Does an application get processed even though the landlord has not filled out his or her application?

A: Yes, the CERA program can help even if your landlord doesn't fill out their portion of the application. It is faster to process when the landlord applies, so it is best if the landlord does apply.

Q: Are there any programs available for the landlords? Tenants who have not paid in 18 months is a hardship.

A: Most CERA payments go to landlords. Please share the CERA program information with your tenant and you can start the application process. Go to <https://www.michigan.gov/CERA> to get more information and start the application process.

Q: For the household income, does that apply for what I filed for last year or is that current paystubs?

A: You can qualify for CERA by either using your 2020 calendar year income or your recent paystubs.

Q: What to do if you had a court date? What do you tell the judge?

A: Tell the judge you have applied for CERA. There will be an automatic 30-day continuance to your case to allow time for application processing.

Q: On the CERA website, I only see help for the rent application. Where do I go for utility?

A: Part of the application asks about your utility bills. If you apply online, the application will ask you to upload your utility bills. You can use a phone or tablet to take a picture of your bills to upload them.

Q: What happens if a person does not have an email address?

A: You can use a paper application. You can get one on our website at <https://www.michigan.gov/CERA> to download it and find your local service agency.